



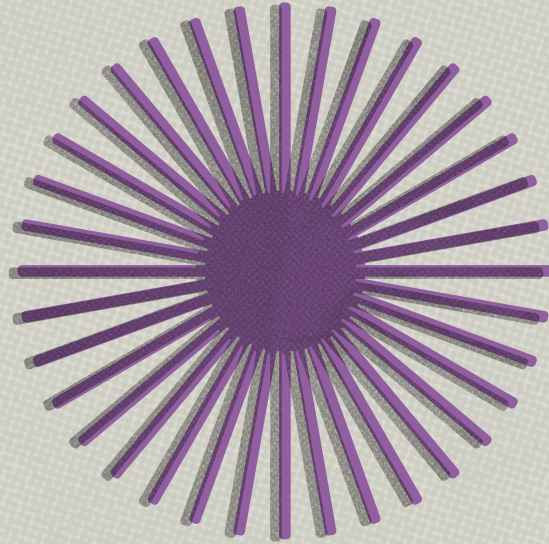
Lessons from Congress, Social Media and Print Media

The Argentinean Green Wave

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Aborto
tu



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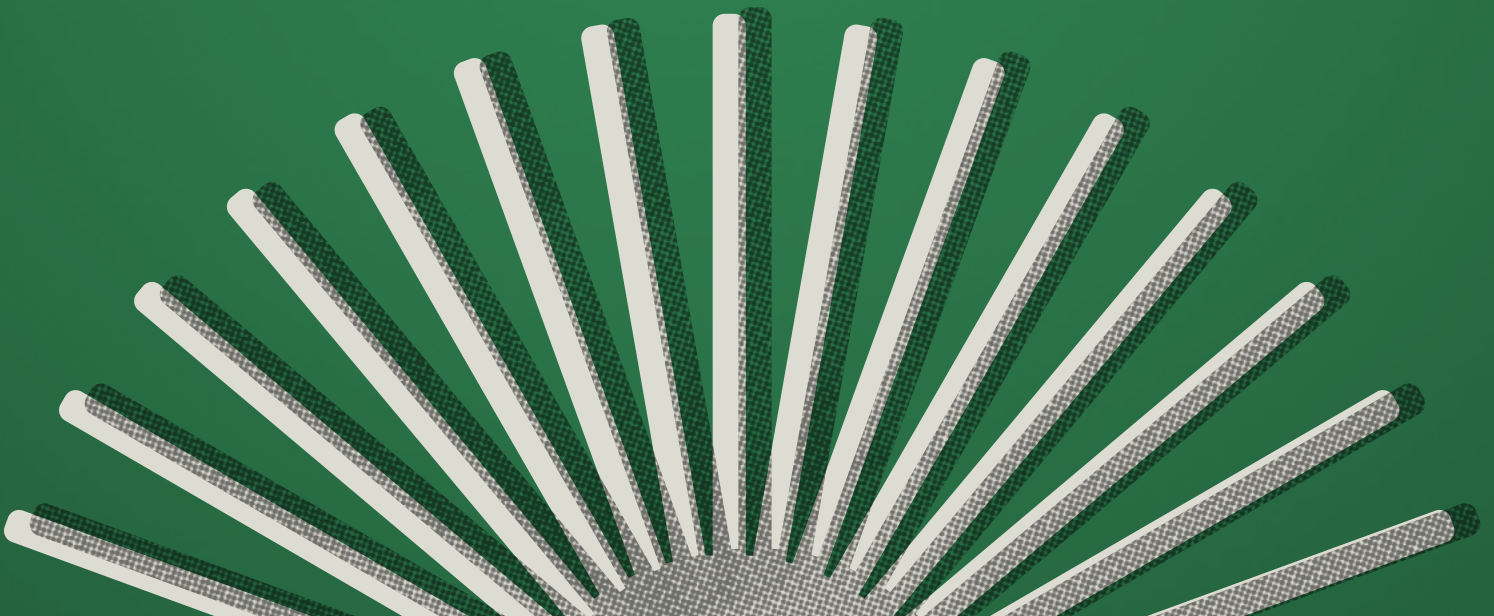
Synthesis of the lessons learned from the social and political debate in Argentina regarding the voluntary termination of pregnancy and post-abortion care law during 2020, drawn from the publication **“El aborto en el Congreso: Argentina 2018-2020”** (“Abortion in Congress: Argentina 2018-2020”)

1. SEVEN MAIN CONCLUSIONS

2. LESSONS LEARNED ABOUT THE TOPICS IN THE DEBATE AT THE NATIONAL CONGRESS

3. LESSONS LEARNED FROM SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGES

4. LESSONS LEARNED FROM COVERAGE IN THE PRESS



01.

SEVEN MAIN CONCLUSIONS

ACTIVIST EXPERIENCE AND HISTORY WAS KEY

Social mobilization was a major asset of the organizations leading abortion advocacy. This mobilization was based on a history of other activist experiences. In Argentina, mass demonstrations in support of the legalization of abortion were built on the mass, cross-generational and multiclass character of the movement *Ni Una Menos* (*Not one woman less*) and its power to raise awareness regarding violence against women. They were also based on the structured mobilization of political organizations in Argentina.

THE DISCUSSION OF ABORTION BECOMES A POLITICAL ISSUE

In many cases, abortion discussions overlapped with debates about the national government, which was a promoter of the legalization of abortion. In this context, organizations advocating for abortion rights needed to propose interpretive frameworks that would overcome the political partisanship raised by some actors in the political arena (both in favour and against legalization).

PREPARE ARGUMENTS FOR ALREADY-IDENTIFIED DEBATES

The nine discursive themes identified (arguments and topics most repeated during the Argentine debate) cover a wide range of subjects likely to be repeated in other countries. With this in mind, it is possible to prepare arguments to address these topics, adjusted to local contexts and based on relevant information for each scenario.

LOCAL DEBATES

Each region of the country had its own debate, with its own figures and social media and press activity.

The abortion debate in each region required a specific strategy designed with detailed knowledge of the local political and cultural environment. In other words, local debates may include data, formats, strategies and stakeholders that differ from the national parliamentary debate.

DO NOT FORGET THE 'BUBBLES'!

In social media, people talk to whomever wants to listen to them, but no one talks to people who do not want to listen to them. Everyone reads what they want to read, and nobody comes into contact with what they do not want to read. These rules, which describe the normal circulation of messages in social media, can be overcome with a specific strategy that requires exiting one's own 'bubble' or entering others.

EXPLORE STORYTELLING

Storytelling of one's own personal abortion experiences as a genre in the print press or social media was not explored in the Argentine debate. Personal experiences can shed light on specific arguments or dimensions of the debate. The well-known testimony "I had an abortion" could bring about new effects if shared in formats that allow learning and understanding more details about personal experiences. However, it should be noted that this strategy could also produce good results to those against the legalization of abortion.

NEXT STEPS

After the approval of the Voluntary Termination of Pregnancy law, specialized organizations foresee three fields of actions for the future: implementation, social decriminalization and monitoring the application of the law. This document is part of that vision.



02. LESSONS LEARNED (AND THEIR MEANING) ABOUT THE TOPICS IN THE DEBATE AT THE NATIONAL CONGRESS

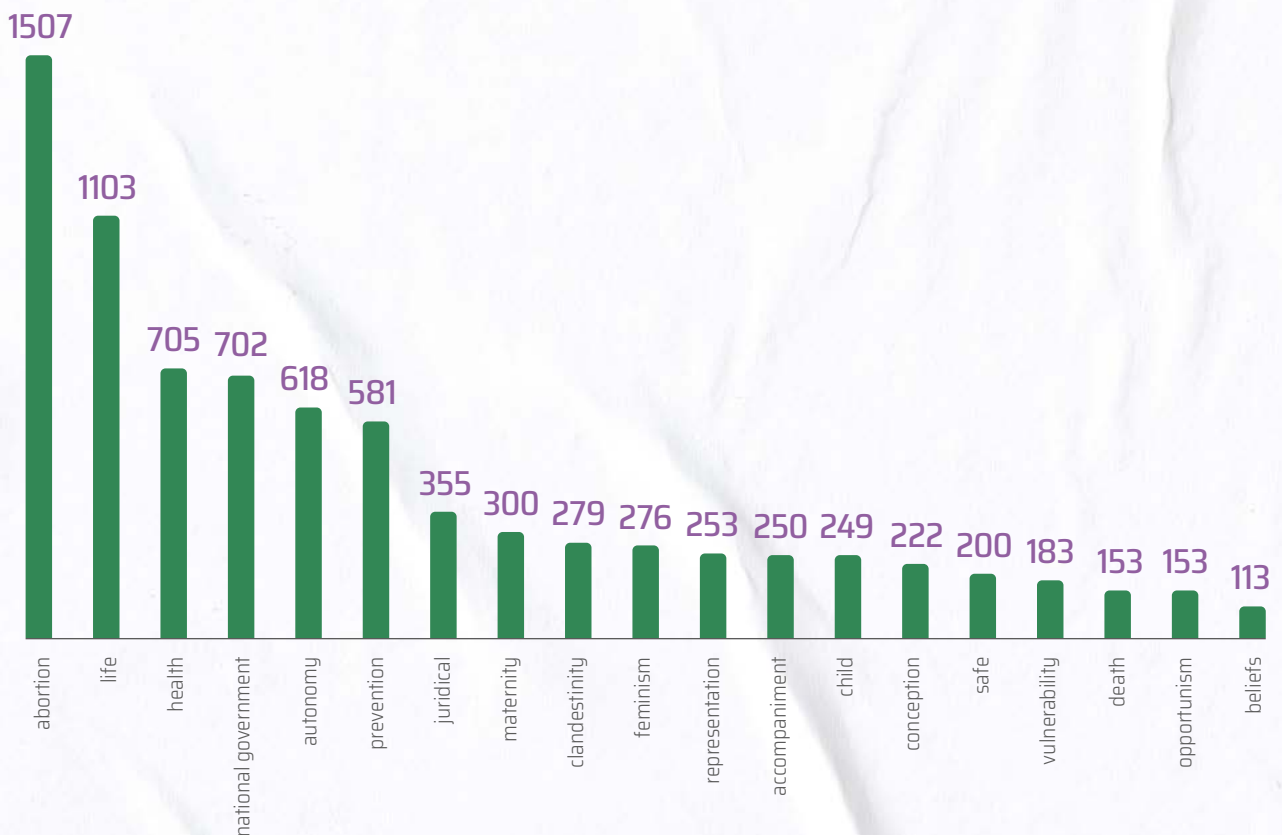
DEBATE OVER A COMMON RANGE OF TOPICS:

The most important lesson is that, during the parliamentary debate, advocates and opponents of legal abortion debated over the meaning of a common range of subjects.

A RANGE OF 19 COMMON TOPICS:

19 topics were most frequently repeated in the speeches of legislators in Congress.

Graph 1: Distribution of keywords grouped into categories.
Total frequency, Deputies and Senators.





SPEECHES IN FAVOR OF LEGALIZATION:
The four most repeated topics were

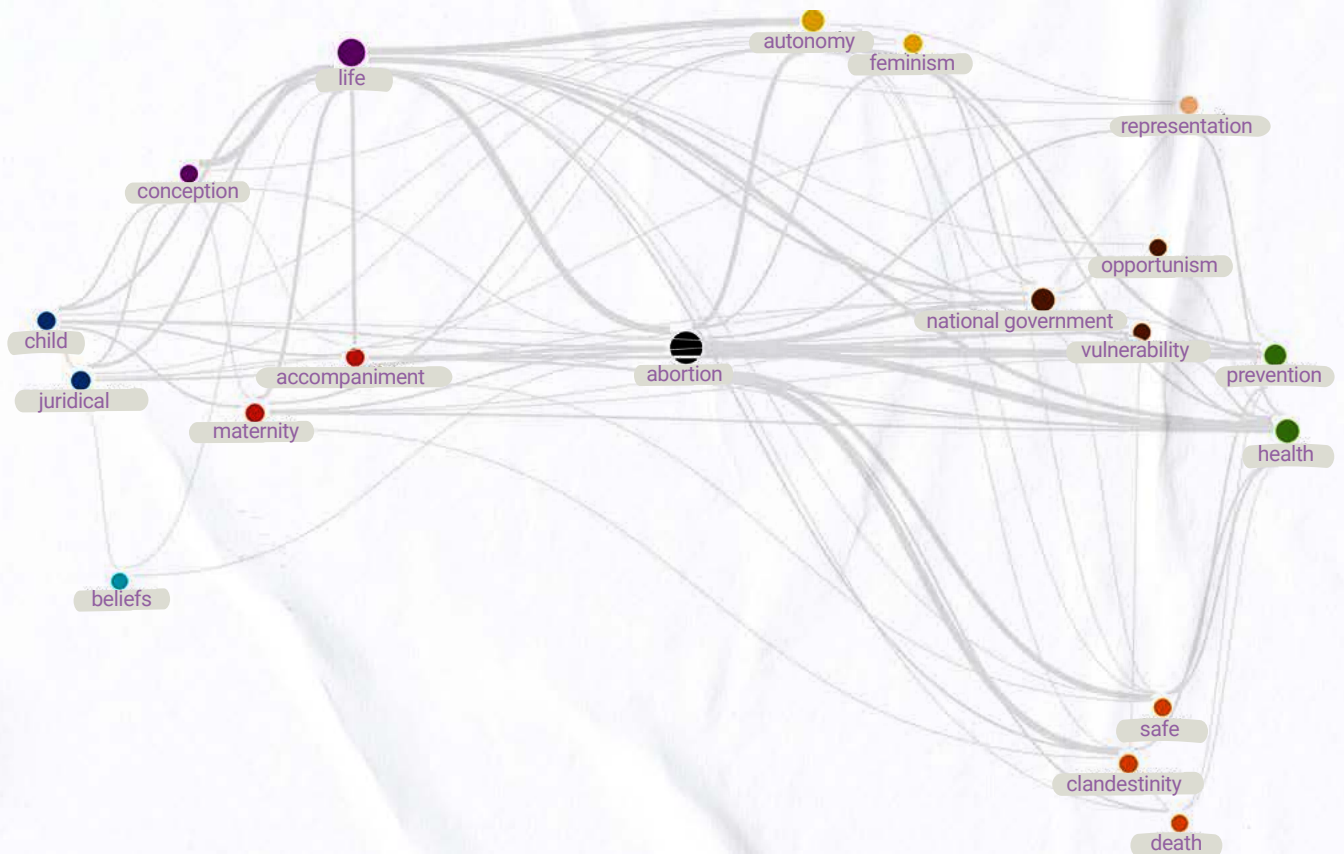
| | |
|----|-----------------|
| 1º | <i>abortion</i> |
| 2º | <i>health</i> |
| 3º | <i>autonomy</i> |
| 4º | <i>life</i> |

SPEECHES AGAINST LEGALIZATION:
The three most repeated topics were

| | |
|----|----------------------------|
| 1º | <i>life</i> |
| 2º | <i>abortion</i> |
| 3º | <i>national government</i> |

TOPICS CAN BE GROUPED IN NINE DISCURSIVE THEMES: During the legislative debate, the main topics were linked with different frequencies. Analysing the frequencies of these associations between topics, nine main discursive themes were identified:

Graph 2: Association between categories: total deputies and senators.



SAME THEMES, DIFFERENT MEANINGS:

The legislative debate was articulated as a debate over the meaning of these discursive themes.

| Theme | Those AGAINST legalization emphasised... | Those IN FAVOUR of legalization emphasised... |
|----------------|---|--|
| SANITARY | The health of the unborn child, the prevention of pregnancy, and the ineffectiveness of legalizing abortion to prevent unintended pregnancies. | Women's health and the need to prevent clandestine abortions. |
| RESTORATIVE | The death of the unborn child. | The death of the pregnant woman. |
| FEMINIST | Recognition of women's movement achievements to improve the situation of women in society, the subordination of a woman's right to choose to the unborn child's right to life. | Recognition of women's movement achievements to improve the situation of women in society, women's rights to life and health. |
| BIOETHICAL | Beginning of life at conception, and technological advances that support this idea. | The hierarchical superiority of a woman's right to life over the embryo's right, based on an incremental vision of the value of life. |
| CONSTITUTIONAL | The collision between the right of the pregnant woman and that of the unborn child, the priority of the unborn child's right to life. | The collision between the right of the pregnant woman and that of the unborn child, the compatibility of both rights by setting time limits to abortion rights. |
| PARTISAN | The opportunism of those who promote the legalization of abortion. | There will never be an 'appropriate' time. |
| SOCIAL | The State must support the pregnancy to term. | The State must support the woman who decides to terminate her pregnancy. |
| REPRESENTATIVE | The opposition to abortion legalization of the majority of society. | Women who have been historically left out of political decisions. |
| RELIGIOUS | The National Constitution is Catholic and the majority of the population is Christian. | The distinction between the private religious sphere and the public secular sphere. |

03.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGES

WE READ WHAT WE WANT TO READ:

The abortion debate did not break the social media 'bubbles' that algorithms generate around each user as a result of their interactions.

THOUGH NOT EASY, IT IS POSSIBLE TO TALK TO OTHERS:

It is possible to send messages to 'bubbles' in which one does not participate, working with that objective along protagonists of those bubbles and using key terms.

TWITTER IS MORE PRO-CHOICE THAN FACEBOOK:

Twitter held more interactions in favour of legalizing abortion; in Facebook, most interactions were against legalization.

YOUNGER AND OLDER PEOPLE IN FAVOUR OF LEGALIZATION:

Both in Twitter and Facebook, younger and older people were more in favour of legalization than middle-aged people.

HETEROGENEOUS GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION:

The geographical distribution of those supporting legalization was uneven; the most populated provinces showed the greatest social support for the voluntary termination of pregnancy.

WOMEN MORE IN FAVOUR THAN MEN:

There was a large difference between women and men, with women being more active and more in favour of abortion legalization on social media.

IDEOLOGY AND ABORTION:

Individuals who were less aware of and had less explicit ideological preferences showed lower levels of support for the legalization of abortion.

04. LESSONS LEARNED FROM COVERAGE IN THE PRESS

THE FEDERAL DISCUSSION:

Both national and regional media covered the debate. **Regional media included newspaper articles on the local context of the debate such as:** the position of local legislators, coverage of local demonstrations and opinions of local actors.

THE DEBATE OUTSIDE CONGRESS:

A third of all the newspaper articles analysed included statements from non-parliamentary actors. The type of actors making the statements were as follows (ordered by number of statements released): religious actors; politicians who were not in Congress; personalities from culture, sports and the media; professional organizations and foreign personalities.

MORE OPINIONS THAN INTERVIEWS:

The majority of newspaper articles were about facts and statements, followed by chronicles, opinion columns, and a few interviews. **Interviews with women talking about their abortion experience were less than 1%** of the total of pieces of news analysed.

THE MOST FREQUENT TOPICS:

The most repeated topics are described below. The way they are expressed show, in many cases, the position of the person using them:

| | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| Abortion is a crime | "Throwaway" of life | X would not have been born if abortion had been legal | Those who defend the christian faith, defend the two lives |
| Clandestine abortion results in the death of women | Abortion is not free of charge | Abortion legalization will reduce the cost incurred on unsafe practices | Unwanted motherhood is a problem, girls cannot be forced to be mothers |
| Abortion is a solution | Women have the duty to bear the consequences of their sexual acts | Abortion is related to women's sexual freedom | If abortion were a men's issue, it would have already been solved |
| Poor women have abortions in worse conditions | Women have the right to choose | Abortion is a women's right | The state must guarantee the right to abortion |
| Clandestine abortion produces stigmatization, violence, suffering and fear | Abortion is a problem that has a solution | Abortion is a public health issue | Abortion violates the rights of unborn children |



| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| IVE law violates the right of freedom of conscience | IVE law goes against freedom of speech and business freedom | The approval of the ive law is a progress for society | Abortion means a step backwards for civilization |
| Abortion is a failure of the state | Legislators should vote according to their convictions | Those who vote for position 'x' are immoral | This is not the right time for the debate |
| Abortion is a historical demand | People have other needs | Abortion is a debt of democracy | The government legalizes abortion for the feminists, who are a minority in the election process |
| Abortion is not a demand from all argentines | The law might affect governance | The law divided society | The government wants a very short debate |
| The majority of people support IVE bill | The majority of people do not support IVE bill | The government is not accountable to church | The legalization of abortion is an international commitment |
| Legalization of aboriton is a progress for the region | Abortion exists as a social fact | | |

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